

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, various of the claims have been amended to improve form and/or to clarify salient features of the invention. Claims 3, 4, 5, 9, and 16 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 2, 6-8, 10-15, and 17-24 are pending and under consideration.

ITEM 2: REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-7 AND 9-24 FOR ANTICIPATION UNDER 35 USC 102(e) BY KEMMICK ET AL. (USP 6,540,559)

The rejection is respectfully traversed.

In accordance with the independent claims 1, 10, 23, and 24 herein, a connector in accordance with the present invention has unique characteristics as set forth in the claims:

- (1) The signal contacts have an identical length; and
- (2) Panel-shaped ground contacts that are provided in common to the two arrays and divide each array of signal contacts into multiple pairs. This limitation reads on the embodiment of the array internal, and array intermediate, ground contacts, shown in Fig. 4, of the plug connector of Fig. 2B.

In contrast, Kemmick shows two arrays of signal contacts. However, the signal contacts of one of the two arrays have different lengths than those of the signal contacts of the other array, as shown, for example, in Fig. 9 of Kemmick. In addition, Kemmick teaches ground contacts 132 and 932. However, these ground contacts of Kemmick are not provided commonly to the two arrays.

Matsumoto, which was also cited by the Examiner, fails to teach or suggest proposed amended claims 1, 10, 23, and 24.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that the claims as now pending patentably distinguish over the references of record.

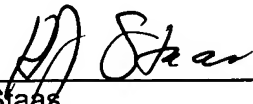
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If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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